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## What's with the walk?

By Will Nicholls

Quebec has yet again shown they have traditions they are unwilling to give up. After releasing the long-awaited Golder Report they withdrew their representative on the steering committee that is supposed to deal with the mining toxins affecting the area surrounding Chibougamau and Oujé-Bougoumou. We have seen unwillingness year after year to truly deal with the toxins released in the environment by older mines.

Year after year, study after study and community consultation after community consultation that have all affirmed and reiterated what was known over 10 years ago is left once more in limbo. The latest spark to assign this issue to purgatory was that OJ committee member Chris Covell insisted on Quebec living up to an agreement to release the report in English and French at the same time. He received clear instructions to attain the Golder Report in English so OJ would be able to look over the findings.

Initial delays in releasing the report were many. At first, Quebec said there was no budget to translate the report despite the agreement. Then Quebec said Golder Associates, the Canadian firm that produced the report, weren't able to do an English version despite the fact this internationally active company has produced many English-language studies and reports.

Instead Quebec was already talking remediation measures they planned to undertake. This was protested as without being able to analyze the report OJ couldn't comment or participate in what would be an effective way to clean up the affected areas.

It seems the blame is to be assigned to Covell and his lack of tact. Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come commented on

Quebec's action. "In response to your recent text, I have to say that despite the interventions of Mr. Covell, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Wildlife must show that it is taking the situation seriously by continuing to work on the steering committee and committing to the implementation of a plan to be jointly developed to remediate the damages caused to the Obatigamau River by the spill of mining effluents. The spill destroyed fish habitat in a long section of the river.

"The issue that sparked Mr. Covell's outburst was the fact that the English translation of the report was taking a long time to produce. This was a legitimate complaint, perhaps not delivered in the most diplomatic of terms. The question remains as to whether MNRF created the situation or just took advantage of the situation to use as a rationale for leaving the steering committee table," stated Coon Come.

In the meantime the "I'm hurt" stance allows the Quebec government to ignore the problems for a little while longer. They don't have to spend money on a clean-up and their timing was amazing. They chose a time when co-chair Peter Campbell of the steering committee was in Australia. He is usually the referee for the committee when there are differences.

Quebec also chose a time when OJ Chief Louise Wapachew was up for re-election. Part of her last campaign platform was to prioritize dealing with the toxins affecting community members. Possibly Quebec's actions could affect this election and they could even see the last of Covell for a while. It's almost like being able to get rid of the lawyers on the opposite side of a court case.

Social acceptability when dealing with mines indeed.

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## K.I.S.S

By Sonny Orr



One of my main beefs about certain things in life is related to how complicated things can get and how simple it could be to resolve – if it were up to me. As in a life-or-death situation when you need to take some medication, does the latest TV commercial flash through your mind about that particular drug? It seems that most miracle cures have debilitating side effects, like heart attacks, convulsions, drowsiness, loss of hair, nervousness, suicidal thoughts, loss of appetite, making high blood pressure higher or low blood pressure lower. For a litany of things that could go wrong if you take that pill that makes you feel just right – if it works properly? I say, wait out the pain until your body adjusts and heals on its own.

Take Michael Jackson, for instance. He seemed like such a happy man. But when you realize the real reason why he used to be so happy, then you wonder if all he ever really needed was real happiness, instead of a drug-induced state of euphoria administered to keep him that way. I guess the moral to his story is that sometimes having too much of a good thing can turn around and bite you where it hurts the most. I believe Jackson led a complicated life.

In our case as Cree, sometimes I value the simple things in life we had or still have when it comes to having a good time or finding happiness. One major happiness factor is watching the sunset or moon rise, depending on whether you are a day or night person. There is always something simple to make you happy, whether you notice it or not, it's

there. Making a simple thing like sunsets complicated is hard to do, so I will use a different example that's easy to complicate.

Call waiting is one thing that was supposed to make life easier and simpler. But it just gets in the way of someone who is already talking to you on the phone, who gets interrupted by someone who calls later. This defeats its purpose and becomes a real complication for those who cannot understand the weird beeps and sounds that cut into your conversation. What's even worse, you pay for this service of insane duplicity. To simplify this matter, I would prefer to hear a busy signal, which would immediately make me press redial, redial, redial until I get through. At the least, when there is no answer at the other end of the line, then either no one is there or no one wants to talk to you – simple!

Simple love songs which repeat the word "love" are rather simplistic for some, even childish for others. But when you think of a love song, it gets complicated when there's a lot of pain involved. Cheating, drinking, drugs, sex, revenge, lying, fooling around in some back alley – these are generally anti-love in nature. But then they make you wonder... how can something simple like love get so complicated? Perhaps it's just the natural evolution of love, the final expression you might say, but I beg to differ.

Like someone (a real old Elder from Israel) told me a long time ago – keep it simple, stupid.

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# Saganash for PM?

## Cree MP puts himself in the running for NDP leader

By Amy German

news

Having already blazed the trail to become the first-ever James Bay Cree to hold a seat in Parliament, Abitibi-Baie-James-Nunavik-Eeyou New Democratic Party MP Romeo Saganash has decided to take his political career even further by announcing his candidacy to become NDP party leader.

If he wins, Saganash will become the first-ever Aboriginal to be head of Canada's Official Opposition and he could end up as the first-ever Aboriginal to run as a party leader for Prime Minister or even end up as Prime Minister.

Since the NDP lost party leader Jack Layton to cancer on August 22 there was a great deal of speculation if Saganash would declare his candidacy at the NDP national caucus meeting September 13-15. Saganash however decided to hold his tongue until the following day when he could be amongst his constituents in Val-d'Or.

"I did it before the Val-d'Or Chamber of Commerce on September 16 because I thought I owed it to the people who elected me to tell them first," said Saganash.

He said he spent much of his time at the two-day caucus meeting mulling over whether this was his time to make the move as other party members had already began consulting their fellow MPs over whether they should run or not.

"I did it the other way around. I didn't start by calling or meeting with my colleagues, I wanted to make this decision first for myself and to be comfortable with it. That is why I took some time to think about it," said Saganash.

Looking at the upcoming race, Saganash said the party platform will not change at this time as all of the MPs will remain loyal to the vision Layton had for Canada and

Canadians. Instead, a great deal of this race will be about who can best articulate that vision that gave the NDP an unprecedented amount of seats in the last federal election.

Who becomes the next party leader won't be left up to the MPs either as those who join the NDP before February 18 will have the opportunity to cast their vote in the leadership race that will be held in Toronto next March 24. Members unable to attend the event will be able to cast their votes either electronically or via mail.

According to Saganash, what many Canadians are unaware of is just how old someone needs to be to join a political party. The legal age in Quebec is 16 and in some provinces it's as low as 13 or 14.

Now what Saganash has to do is increase the party membership in his riding and beyond. He said in recent weeks he has been helping out NDP members in other ridings in Quebec and Ontario doing membership drives and has seen some MPs double their riding's membership over the course of a weekend.

In the coming weeks, Saganash will head back up north to do the same throughout the Cree communities and other Aboriginal reserves. Saganash is hoping that people in his riding will respond favourably as membership drives have not been seen too often in these areas.

As for his daytime job as an MP, Saganash has had to give up his position as opposition critic for the Natural Resources portfolio. However, he has worked it out with interim party leader Nycole Turmel so that he can continue to ask questions. He said he felt that this was particularly important because of the large amount of nat-

ural-resource development going on in his riding.

As for the man whose shoes he wants to fill, Saganash said he really



sees his running as a continuation of what he already promised Layton back when he was asked to run last February.

"He and I both agreed on the fact that the global challenge we are facing on the planet right now is what we are seeing here in this riding, like climate change, resource development, environmental protection, water rights and relations with Aboriginal peoples. We were on the same page and he told me who better than me to represent this.

"It was that commitment that I made to (Layton) that I want to continue. Unfortunately, he won't be there beside me, but I've decided to continue the work we started together," said Saganash.



*"We still have a dream:  
our children deserve better!"*

In 1975 the Cree Nation achieved a long time dream of assuming Cree control of Cree education.

In 1988, the Cree School Board faced its first crisis, and under Kenny's leadership and the Council of Commissioner's focus on Cree rights; the original Cree School Board Agreement was negotiated and entered into. This Agreement set a benchmark in the quality and quantity of Cree education, responsibility and accountability.

Now, in 2011 the Cree Nation is facing yet another major crisis on Cree education!

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# Investing in the future

news

## Former PM Paul Martin awarded for his involvement in fostering Aboriginal relations

By Akiva Levitas

On September 29, the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB) and Sodexo Canada presented former Prime Minister Paul Martin the first-ever Award for Excellence in Aboriginal Relations at its ninth annual Vancouver gala dinner. He received the award for his involvement with the development of the Aboriginal communities through the Martin Aboriginal Initiative (MAI).

The MAI has been working on two fronts to promote prosperity in Native communities. The first being the Martin Aboriginal Education Initiative (MAEI), which focuses on improving local schools and providing role models for the next generation. The second approach is through the Capital for Aboriginal Prosperity and Entrepreneurship (CAPE) fund which promotes entrepreneurship and financial independence for Aboriginal peoples.

Long before he got into politics, Martin was working toward building bridges with Native people. In his youth, Martin made lifelong friends among the young Aboriginals, Métis and Inuit working north of 60 during his summers. As a founding member of the CCAB, he understood that for Canada to be strong it has to promote economic development among the youngest and fastest growing segment of the population.

In 2006, the problems affecting First Nations were put on the table during an unprecedented and historic occasion for Canada known as the Kelowna Accord. Needless to say, the Kelowna Accord has been put on hold by the Harper administration and the process for development was stalled. As Martin put it, "It was a tragedy."

Martin pointed out how during the discussions at Kelowna the subject of the underfunded education system was brought up and yet nearly six years later

the system is still underfunded. It is because of the work Martin did afterwards through his initiatives that has partially fixed what was meant to be fixed by the accord that he has been chosen to receive the award.

When asked about the award, Martin said, "I'm honoured, very much so. But it's important to realize that this is not an honour just for me. This is really an honour that is made to the people who are working to make CAPE a success. It's an honour to the people who are working



at MAEI in the education initiative from those running the organization to the teachers and students."

The goal of MAEI is to cultivate within young Aboriginals the knowhow to start a business, work in marketing and learn accounting principles. The hope is that these students eventually launch their own businesses and give back to their communities as role models. When the next generation of Aboriginals begins leading the way in Canadian industries, it will continue to pay out in dividends by inspiring more youth.

To reach these goals MAEI has started a pilot project in two model school in

southwestern Ontario to work on improving literacy and numeracy. These projects are meant to test the water and see just what it takes to improve the education system. It has already helped create the first "by Aboriginal, for Aboriginal" school textbook which is a first in Canada.

Being a two-pronged approach, the MAI follows students after they finish their education and are preparing to make the leap forward. The CAPE fund was started by Martin and his family and 21 of Canada's top companies in order to foster business growth and opportunity among Aboriginals.

Its main goal is to invest in enterprises with a high degree of Native involvement. Some of the investments include One Earth Farms from the Prairies which intends on becoming the biggest and most efficient operating farm in cooperation with First Nations. In Winnipeg, CAPE is working with Manitobah, a Métis-owned fashion company. They combine Native-inspired design with Canada's internationally recognized brand of superior quality.

As for investments in Quebec, CAPE doesn't have any but Martin pointed out, "We're only getting started."

On the education side of things, MAEI is in deep negotiations with the Quebec government as well as various Aboriginal organizations. The intention is to begin as soon as possible.

The work Martin and his organizations have put into improving the education and increasing opportunities for Aboriginals is truly inspiring. The main lesson behind all of this is that Canada has plenty to gain from working with Aboriginals. If not because of the moral issue but also because it will guarantee a brighter and more prosperous future for Canada as a whole.

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Contest  
ends on  
October 31

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Community: \_\_\_\_\_

Sample Collected From:

|               |             |
|---------------|-------------|
| • Shore Line  | • Lake Side |
| • Island      | • Mountain  |
| • Stream Bank | • Other     |
| • River Bank  |             |

Sample Location Place Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Map: \_\_\_\_\_

GPS Coordinates: \_\_\_\_\_ E \_\_\_\_\_ N

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



## Lemon Cree offers group fitness instructor certification

For those looking to become certified group fitness instructors through Theresa Ducharme's innovative Lemon Cree fitness and wellness program, the time to sign up is fast approaching.

Ducharme was happy to announce that from November 18-20, Lemon Cree will be holding a three-day training course in Montreal for trainers. The course will show that those certified to teach groups are educated in regards to proper exercise techniques, safety measures, healthy lifestyle practices and innovative fitness. Upon completing the course, students will be evaluated to receive their certificates.

According to Ducharme, the new course came out of the recommendations that Lemon Cree made to the Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association after working with the Cree communities for over a year to improve the overall health of Cree women in James Bay.

"If local recreation and wellness programs and if the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay can get involved by sponsoring Crees to get them certified, this is something that will help in the communities. It is really important for safety measures that people do get certified because then every year they get updated with the new techniques, trends and information," said Ducharme.

For more info:  
[www.lemoncree.com](http://www.lemoncree.com)

## Waskaganish gets new telecom tower

Construction is underway to create a new regional 300-foot telecom facility in Waskaganish that will allow radio station CJRH 92.5 FM to expand its reach

an estimated 110 km beyond the community. It is also expected that once the tower is operational, radio service will be available to about an additional 200 km of the James Bay Highway.

As an added bonus, the new tower will allow for two-way radio-telephone service for emergency services in the area.

The project is being carried out by the Cree Nation of Waskaganish and CJRH with project management services from RTS Canada. A similar project was carried out with RTS Canada in Wemindji two years ago.

In total the anticipated cost for the project is budgeted at \$575,000.

## Correction

In the article "Grads at last" appearing on page 5 of *the Nation* (Vol. 18, Issue 23; Sept. 23, 2011), Geraldine's last name should have been Trapper. Also, the teacher who flew in from Newfoundland is Stephanie Dooley. Dooley taught Trapper a class called PSD in Secondary 1, and was Trapper's homeroom teacher in Secondary 2..



Cree Woman Hunter From Eastmain Betty Tomatuk kills her third moose of her three-year big-game hunting career so far... a nice young five-pointer bull on September 21 at 12:40pm near the Eastmain Airport, about 0.5km away from the community. She has also killed six caribou so far.



Comic strip courtesy of Tundra Comics: [www.tundracomics.com](http://www.tundracomics.com)



# Illustrated stories

*The Nation* finds inspiration abounding at Montreal's comic-book convention

By Amy German





In the past Comic-Cons, or comic-book conventions, have been synonymous with nerdy and marginal types obsessed with comics and movie characters to the point of extremes. But that ain't exactly the case anymore. The love for all things superhero has without a doubt gone mainstream.

Montreal's Comic-Con 2011 (September 17-18) brought out 20,000 enthusiasts daily while Place Bonaventure had room for only 15,000

"WE ALSO HAVE THE CANADIAN WHO IS LIKE CAPTAIN AMERICA. HE IS THE 'FED' WHO BASICALLY WORKS FOR OTTAWA OR 'WASHINGTON' AND PRETTY MUCH RUNS ALL OF CANADA. HE IS A BLUE BOY BUT HIS CHARACTER GETS VERY DARK."

of them to get in. And, despite popular belief, not all of them looked like they were emerging from mom's basement for the first time in over six months... though there were several questionable types with Spock ears.

At the same time, it was these comic-book devotees who made the event just as much as the visiting celebrities and the purveyors of all things comics. Just looking at the queue to get into the event you could see hun-

dreds dressed up like their heroes. Jedi Knights talking to Sailor Moon girls, countless Batmans, Supermans, Spidermans, a set of wannabe Sookie and Jason Stackhouses from True Blood, a few Power Rangers and then an endless laundry list of characters who we didn't recognize.

Alone with the Darth Vader and series of Stormtroopers stationed throughout the exposition hall, the

patrons were as big of a part of the show as anyone else.

While patrons could get in line to purchase photos of themselves with Marvel Comics creator Stan Lee, the original Batman and Robin (Adam West and Burt Ward), Spike and Harmony from Buffy the Vampire Slayer (a.k.a. James Marsters and Mercedes McNab) and other stars from TV and film who have brought many a favourite character

to life, *the Nation* chose to focus on other happenings at Comic-Con.

Rather than trying to hub-nub it with the A-listers, we decided to spend our time talking to those behind-the-scenes, those inking the pages and filling up speech bubbles and those who have created other worlds online and on the page. Our objective of this special Comic-Con coverage is to spark an interest amongst our readers in comics for youth and adults alike. Whether you read them, create them or draw them, we salute your interest as we were mesmerized by the world within the convention.

The first person we met was Kelly Tindall, a Toronto-based comic-book artist who has worked in various capacities in the industry.

"I make comics. I write then, I draw them, I also letter them and sometimes I colour them. I started working in comics back in 2007 and went in this direction because it is really all I like to do," said Tindall

There to support his various work, like horror story Green Way and web comic That's So Craven, Tindall explained that though what he was showcasing was quite dark, his work is multi-faceted.

"This is what you do when you get into the business and where you can





get the work. I've been lucky that I haven't been pigeonholed as a horror guy, so I've been able to do a couple of other things. But what I really want to do are kids books because there is room in kids books for a little bit of everything," said Tindall.

Tindall said that while his love of comics was spurned at a young age, his desire to create them is all about the versatility of the medium. Having worked as an illustrator previously, he felt stifled by having to tell a whole story with just one image. In creating comics he could tell many stories and create many images.

To see Tindall's work, go to [www.kellytindall.com](http://www.kellytindall.com)

A few tables down, artist David Germaine was showcasing his latest work, a graphic novel titled "Jesus Needs Help".

"It is really a spoof on censorship for the most part," explained Germaine whose story features Jesus Christ being attacked by a series of "censorship monkeys".

"Jesus gets help from his father of course in this story as he is the only one who can help. It is a very tongue-and-

cheek story and whether you are a believer or not you will find something to enjoy in this book," Germaine added.

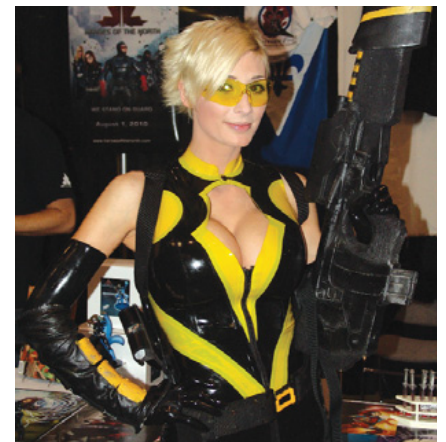
Over at one of Comic-Con's flashier displays, Anderson Bradshaw, a Montreal stuntman, actor, martial arts and weapons coordinator, was in full costume as Eight Ball, a character from the Canadian superhero live-action web series, *Heroes of the North*. He and his cast were there to promote the new series/brand that he and Christian Viau have created.

The series, which is presented in six-to-eight-minute segments online, has just been picked up to become a printed graphic novel that will see mass distribution. What makes it so unique, according to Bradshaw, is that while it may draw parallels with familiar elements of the Marvel and DC comic-book worlds, *Heroes of the North* is actually set in Canada... well, at least an alternate version of Canada.

"Each character has a sector. You have your urban dwellers who are the Punisher/Dead Pool/Batman type of guys and I am one of them for Montreal/NDG. Then we have Nordic. She was a child left for dead in the

Arctic, who was found by an Inuit family and she has some special powers. There is also a series of Russian/North Korean type of characters and it's Nordic job to protect that sector from them.

"We also have the Canadian who is like Captain America. He is the 'Fed' who basically works for Ottawa or 'Washington' and pretty much runs all of



Canada. He is a blue boy but his character gets very dark," explained Bradshaw.

With a series of intertwining characters whose stories parallel headlines out of today's news and beyond, *Heroes of the North* has a lot to offer avid comics fans. For more info: [www.heroesofthenorth.com/](http://www.heroesofthenorth.com/)





Of course, what Comic-Con would be complete without something to whet the appetites of Star Trek fans? To promote the upcoming William Shatner show at Montreal's Place des Arts on November 4, there was a booth at the convention that featured several attractive young women dressed up as a original Star Trek crew in skimpy 1960s uniforms.

"The show is pretty much Shatner doing everything that he does which is being really charming, dancing, singing, rapping, talking about his experiences and he has lots as he is 80 years old. He is like a male Joan Rivers but with less botox... or maybe about the same amount," said Lisa, one of the show's promoters.

For those whose fantasy it was to have themselves drawn into their favourite comic books, illustrator Vince Sunico was on hand inking portraits or pinups of both superheroes and superhero versions of fans on commission.

Sunico, who has done contract work for some of the big studios, said he works the Comic-Con circuit throughout North America for both business and pleasure.

"I have always been a big fan of superheroes, Spiderman was my favourite as a kid. What got me

as an artist. So, if you see my stuff, you will know that it is mine. But if you look at something from Disney, all you can see is Disney," said Sunico

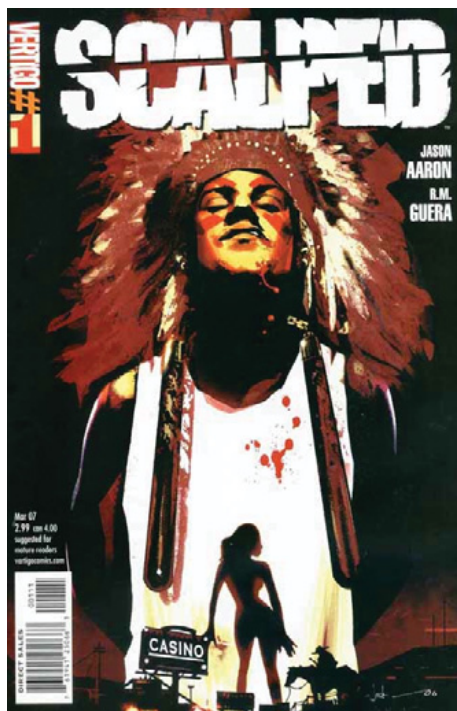
While he hasn't made it into the Marvel or DC studios yet, Sunico said he hopes it will happen one day. To view his work: [www.spentpencils.com](http://www.spentpencils.com)

Manning her own table to hawk her series of posters and her brand-new comic book, Sonia Anwar is among two minorities in the comic-book industry – female and Muslim.

Anwar's poster series features women from a variety of ethnic origins in an Art Nouveau framing while her comic book 1001, presents similar visuals but retells portions of the Tales of the Arabian Nights from a more modern and feminist approach.

"Being a woman of Pakistani heritage, being Muslim and coming from that part of the world, I wanted to showcase that in my work. That is why I like to think of myself as a strong and ambitious woman.

"Here I have tried to bring female characters of different ethnicities and different cultures to the table who are also strong and have a lot more going on for them than what is on the surface. This is



into this was that compared to animation, you can really identify a lot more



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## ALLAN J. HAPPYJACK, SR. FOR CREE SCHOOL BOARD CHAIRPERSON



### THE JOURNEY

Like many Crees of my generation, we were taken away from our homes and loved ones many years ago at a very young age of 6 or 7 years to attend an Indian Residential School. I had never seen or had not the chance to express my love and gratitude to my parents and grandparents!

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just what we need in comics – more substance in our women as we are a lot more than just someone's girlfriend or sister," said Anwar.

Manning the Archie Comics booth was none other than longtime Archie writer and illustrator Dan Parent who has spent the past 24 years creating Archie strips. Even after all those years, Parent said he and his editors are never at a loss for script ideas as they draw so much from pop culture.

"It's been in my blood for so long that it's become an old hat for me," said Parent as he casually sketched away at some work in front of him.

Behind him were covers for upcoming issues that featured Archie and company as the Wizard of Oz characters and as the members of the rock band Kiss. Parent explained that while some on the covers were favourites, the Kiss cover was for an issue they are currently working on and that his editors had been in talks with Gene Simmons and the gang to get the issue out.



When asked his favourite character, Parent didn't hesitate before answering Jughead and saying as he could identify with him the most. Parent also said he is a big fan of hamburgers though he doesn't eat them by the plate load.

While there were lots of independent comic-book and graphic-novel artists at the convention to promote their latest works, we were probably

most impressed with Anthony Del Col, the co-creator and co-writer of Kill Shakespeare.

This action-adventure comic-book series is all about Shakespeare's greatest heroes and villains coming together in the same world, same story and same adventure to either kill or save a mysterious wizard by the name of William Shakespeare.

When asked if his books were just a ploy to get teens to read Shakespeare plays, Del Col said a lot of teachers and librarians had actually begun to pick up on the series because they see it as a "gateway drug" to get kids into the Bard.

"This is the kind of story that shines a new spotlight on these characters and in a very unique way. You learn a thing or two about Juliet or



Here's your Amy German maternity shots with special friends

# Reaching for the top

## Three candidates are in the race to become the Chair of the School Board

By Amy German

Since outgoing Cree School Board Chairman Gordon Blackned resigned from his position after being elected Chief of Waskaganish this past summer, the question being asked throughout the communities has been: who will serve out the remaining year of his term?

This is why Crees will be heading back to the polls on October 12 for advance polls and on October 19 for the election of a new Chairperson to head up the Cree School Board (CSB).

In light of this, *the Nation* got in touch with the three candidates – Kenny Blacksmith, Kathleen J. Wooten and Allan J. Happyjack – to see why they feel that they are the best candidates to fill Blackned's shoes for the remainder of his term. All three have had a lengthy history with the CSB.

### Kenny Blacksmith

After suffering a heart attack just weeks ago, Kenny Blacksmith was happy to confirm from his hospital bed that he indeed was still in the running and feeling in fine form.

"I don't know what caused the heart attack as they didn't find any clogs in my arteries. It could be that I am still so in love



with my wife that when I look at her I just get excited," Blacksmith said jokingly.

But on a more serious note, Blacksmith said he was throwing his hat into the ring because of his current concern for the CSB.

"People have forgotten that the principle of Cree education is a Cree right and nowadays it has become more of a policy issue. I find this difficult since over time the CSB has lost its sensitivity and understanding to the fact that every community is different. Every community has specific needs for progress to happen," said Blacksmith.

According to Blacksmith, his experience with the CSB since the 1980s puts him in a good position in terms of understanding the development of Cree education. Blacksmith said he was a school commissioner from 1988-1990 and then again

from 2000-2005 and he also served as President of the CSB 1988-1992.

Looking at the CSB's current state of affairs, particularly when it comes to school success rates, Blacksmith believes that the CSB is facing a crisis that needs a swift resolution. He has no desire to make his position political but sees himself as the man for the job because of how well he was able to deal with the situation the last time the CSB was in crisis in 1988.

At the time the Quebec government was about to get trusteeship over the CSB and Blacksmith was part of those negotiations over a three-month period with the Ministry of Education.

"The council of commissioners back then was very firm about the rights and issues and we fought hard and won a battle to get all of the money we could ever need," said Blacksmith.

Looking at the current crisis, Blacksmith said that with a success rate hovering around 8.6%, these are numbers that should be snapping the CSB back into being more proactive like they were in 1988. He believes it is high time to develop a vision that will allow the CSB to move forward.

His plan as School Chair would be to look at what students need in terms of school readiness and address them on a per community basis as each school is facing different problems. There is one-size-fits-all solution and decentralizing some of the regional services may be the best way to tackle the issues.

Blacksmith said his plan would also include doubling the amount of commissioners' meetings as well as having frequent meetings with individual Chiefs and Councils so that each community's needs are understood and met.

"It will be a hard deed to address the issues that are before us, but I know that I can do it. I know that we can even achieve greater progress with the crisis that we are in because I love our people and I care for the children," said Blacksmith.

### Kathleen Wooten

Having been involved in both education and then politics over the last 30 years, Kathleen Wooten feels she has the best shot at becoming the CSB Chairperson because of her experience on the job and through her education.

Wooten first appeared on the education scene in Mississauga in the early 1980s when





she began the teacher-training program and started working as a substitute teacher. Wanting to further her own education, Wooten registered at McGill University in 1982 and graduated with a Bachelor of Education in 1985. She returned to McGill in 1999 to complete a Master's degree in Educational Leadership.

In terms of working in the field of education, outside of her stint as Deputy Chief of Mistissini from 2002-2010, Wooten said she has worked for the CSB in various capacities since 1989, holding positions as a teacher, instructor and then a school commissioner for Mistissini. Last year she also served as Vice-Chair of the CSB.

It is because of her experience, particularly as a commissioner and as Vice-Chair that Wooten feels she knows the problems the schools and the CSB have been facing.

"I feel that our focus hasn't been on the students, we have worked around them. I believe that this is one of the reasons why our students aren't succeeding in school, because we have not made them a priority.

"I also feel that people have forgotten why the CSB exists. The reason for its existence is to educate and teach children, to give them the knowledge and skills that they need in life. Our focus has been on making sure that the infrastructure is in place and now we need to turn our focus to what happens in the classroom and to make sure that the children are learning to read and write," said Wooten.

Wooten said as Chair she would demand the necessary information that shows which programs are working and which aren't because she feels that administrators at the top need evidence to be able to act.

Wooten said she feels that her background, education and experience makes her the best candidate for the job. Having received an education outside of the communities has also given Wooten a perspective that she believes would help her as Chair.

"I don't have all of the answers but I feel that there needs to be leadership in terms of setting a direction for where the CSB needs to go. I want to make sure that the students are the focus of education and that they are the priority. We need to make sure that the schools have all of the resources they need in order to be able to deliver the education to the students," said Wooten.

### Allan J. Happyjack

Having been there in the beginning when the CSB was set up is what Allan J. Happyjack believes gives him the edge to be the next School Chair.

Happyjack began his career with the CSB in 1980, after being handpicked by then Chairman Billy Diamond to work alongside him.

"I began working with the CSB in March 1980. Then in October 1981, I was successfully interviewed for the position of Director General of the Cree School Board, and I was given the honour fill that position from until March 1989," said Happyjack.

Since that time, Happyjack has held the position of Chief of Waswanipi from 1990-93 and then served as school commissioner for his community twice: 1994-2005 and 2008-2011. He has also served as Vice-Chairman of the CSB, giving him the necessary experience for the job.

As for who would make a better candidate to fill Blackned's shoes, Happyjack said this is something best decided by the Cree people when they exercise their right to vote.

Happyjack however did add, "I am a qualified and good candidate to act on behalf of the youth and the students of Eeyou Istchee. I would be deeply honoured to continue the work and mandate of Gordon Blackned as Chairman for the next 10 months."





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# Walking for justice

## Walk4Justice demands that missing and murdered Native women need justice

By Irkar Beljaars

On September 19, I had the honour, along with Theresa Ducharme, to emcee the Walk4Justice rally on Parliament Hill. Walk4Justice participants arrived in Ottawa after walking nearly 5000 miles from Vancouver. They started their journey in June, traveling through different communities and meeting with supporters who added their stories to the growing list of missing and murdered women. The Walk4Justice was born out of frustration by individuals who felt they were constantly being ignored by the police, the justice system, the government and society as a whole.

Gladys Radek, co-founder of the Walk4Justice, stated, "We need justice. We need closure. We need equality. But that isn't going to happen if there isn't accountability."

The walkers were joined by about 150 supporters and group representatives, including several NDP and Liberal politicians, among them Romeo Saganash, Oliver Chow and Charlie Angus. Others included Jeannette Corbiere-Lavell, President of the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC), and Chief Billy Williams, Squamish First Nation. Groups lending their support were the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) and Missing Justice, the Montreal-based collective.

One of the last to speak was National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Shawn A-in-chut Atleo, who thanked all the supporters in attendance. "We come out here to stand beside you and behind you so that your words can penetrate walls behind us and bring justice to those who have been murdered and are still missing."

The challenges facing Native women today are immense and often disheartening. In Vancouver last month I was taken aback by the sheer despair of the Downtown Eastside. The differences between rich and poor were startling; the moment I crossed from East

Hastings Street to the West was like night and day. On one corner, dilapidated buildings, and on another million-dollar condos rose up into the sky looking over the poor and downtrodden. The Walk4Justice's demands are simple: a national task force to investigate missing and murdered Native women, healing centres for battered women to get the support they need, and a national inquiry into violence against Native women. Though there is a similar inquiry going on in BC right now, supporters feel it will do little to curb the problem.

One of many who showed up to the rally was Brenda Osborne whose daughter went missing in 2008. "My daughter has been missing for three years, one month and 25 days as of today. When am I going to receive justice?"

And that is where a lot of the frustration comes from: the lack of empathy from the government and police forces that prefer to pass on the blame rather than take responsibility for not doing anything.

Beverly Jacobs, the former head of the NWAC, echoed that sentiment. "We're dealing with racism, sexism and societal indifference."

When you think of societal indifference think of the story of Ashley Machisknic, 22, who was thrown from a fifth-floor window of the Regent Hotel in Vancouver last September. Police ruled it a suicide, which sparked a protest from community leaders and family members who insisted that Machisknic was not suicidal. Walking past the Regent Hotel my first thought was "How could anyone live in such a place?" And the answer is that they don't have any choice.

In the time the walkers left Vancouver in June and arrived in Ottawa on September 19, 37 new names had been added to the list of missing and murdered – 37 life stories, 37 mothers who will never be heard again. "That is



an act of genocide," said Bernie Williams, cofounder of the Walk4Justice.

The absent Minister for Status of Women Rona Ambrose offered a prepared statement in which she stated, "We are with you in spirit." To which one of the walkers responded, "Shame!"

Prime Minister Stephen Harper has been quite silent on the matter of missing and murdered Native women, which does not bode well for the supporters of Walk4Justice and the Sisters in Spirit. Last year Harper pledged \$10 million to help fight the problem, but the money has since been allocated to the RCMP and the Status of Women Canada, both of which have no concrete plan to deal with issue of missing and murdered Native women.

So now that Harper has a majority government, we will get more of what we do not need: fighter jets and prisons. My question is this: does Harper really respect the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, or is he just playing politics?

*Irkar Beljaars can be heard on Native Solidarity News every Tuesday on CKUT 90.3 FM. Find him on Facebook and Twitter (mohawk\_voice).*

# Cree women summit

## CWEIA members congregate once more for their AGA in Val-d'Or

By Amy German

Celebrating their own leadership, determination and courage, the Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association (CWEIA) congregated for the fourth consecutive year for their Annual General Assembly in Val-d'Or on September 17 and 18.

According to Regional Coordinator Holly Danyluk, a good time was had by all, though, by holding elections for a new executive board, it did get a little tense for a while.

"Having an election never makes anything easy," Danyluk joked.

But, in the end the CWEIA emerged with a brand-new executive. It includes: Virginia Wabano as the new President, Carmen Faries as Vice-President, Noreen Moar was reelected as Treasurer as was Irene Bearskin House as the Elder Representative, and Mary Ann Katapatuk elected as the Youth Representative.

While the women of the Cree nation had the opportunity to meet, greet, discuss and learn at their AGA, Danyluk said this year's events were toned down due to financial restrictions. As a result, the CWEIA decided to put on galas every two years instead of annually.

Despite the rollbacks, the gals managed to have a good time. While they spent their days at the Cégep de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue Aboriginal Pavilion taking in lectures and presentations, the CWEIA also enjoyed a dinner prepared by a local caterer and featuring homegrown Cree entertainment.

"Annie Blacksmith's young daughter sang for us and we had a little gift exchange. Charlotte Ottereyes was our comedian/emcee for the evening; she managed to throw in a few jokes here and there. The night went on for a few hours and then we parted ways," said Danyluk.

While the two-day event may have been smaller and more sombre than the previous year that did by no means diminish the opportunity for learning and sharing that CWEIA members participated in.

The main focus for this year's speakers was the health of Cree women, particularly where obesity and diabetes were concerned. Catherine Godin from the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay (CBHSSJD) made a presentation on diabetes and women in the Cree communities, showing just how affected the women are by Type 2 diabetes.

"She talked about how the epidemic has grown in the past 10-20 years. This really provided a wake-up call to all of us who were in attendance," said Danyluk.

Godin's presentation was followed by Theresa Ducharme of Lemon Cree,

grams throughout Eeyou Istchee for Elders and men.

"I presented the report on Lemon Cree, the recommendations from that report and also the successes that we have had in the communities. I pointed out, for example, that Oujé-Bougoumou, since March 2011, as a group doing Bounce-Fit has lost 112.5 pounds collectively.

"One woman, Pricilla Bosum, has lost 31.5 pounds and 12 inches.

"The community of Eastmain has also, as of May 21, lost 39.9 inches," said Ducharme.



who has helped hundreds of Cree women lose weight and several inches around their waistlines in phase one of this CWEIA endeavour.

"Her results were very inspirational to the group because many people have lost a lot of weight in the last year and we want to continue this to the second phase. But what needs to be done before that can happen is we have to go out and find new funding," said Danyluk.

The problem with trying to get the second phase off the ground of the Lemon Cree exercise program however has been that to date, Danyluk has been unable to acquire the kind of funding needed from the federal government. While she has managed to get some funds from the CBHSSJD, they are not enough to get the second phase started which would see a great deal of enhancement to the existing Bounce-Fit program as well as widespread pro-

According to Ducharme, while the CWEIA was able to provide for her to make only one training visit per community, the Lemon Cree program has taken on a life of its own. Some of the communities have managed to sustain their Bounce-Fit programs by coming up with local funding to pay trainers and the community of Nemaska even managed to get a men's program running through Lemon Cree as there was such a demand for it.

"Power-Fit came from the requests made by the men in the communities since there were programs running for the women and they wanted something for themselves. So, my son Christopher, who is a certified fitness trainer, created Power-Fit, a strength and cardio program for men. We now travel once a month to Nemaska and this is just for the guys," said Ducharme.



Ducharme has also since developed a Dance-Fit course in Montreal at the demand of younger Lemon Cree clientele.

"Dance-Fit was something that came from the younger people. I call it the Cree-style version Zumba, a new dance craze that is a mix of salsa and different Latin American dances," said Ducharme.

Considering the fact that Lemon Cree only partnered with the CWEIA back in the summer of 2010, the success of the program is proof that with the right funding and proper support, a major success story has already emerged that has changed the face of the Cree nation.

Getting back to the AGA, arts crafts and tradition were also discussed at the event with a presentation made by Lloyd Cheechoo of the Cree Native Arts and Crafts Association (CNACA).



Though Cheechoo spoke mainly about CNACA's mission and its vision of the future to showcase and sell Cree handicrafts to the world, he also appealed to the Cree women at the event to share the products they make with the association.

Native women from the south of Quebec also had their time to speak at the AGA as Quebec Native Women Inc. made a special presentation to CWEIA delegates. Michèle Audette and Marie-Eve Lachapelle Bordeleau spoke about the importance of assembling Quebec's Native women as a whole as that will be their mission come this November 18-20 in Kahnawake when they host the Gathering of Nations.

In terms of resolutions, Danyluk said the first major one to emerge from this year's AGA was to ensure that the Cree Elders be involved as much as possible in whatever endeavours the CWEIA is pursuing.

More information on other resolutions being passed is still pending.

In terms of the CWEIA's new President and Vice President, *the Nation* had the opportunity to sit down and speak with Wabano and Faries a few days after the AGA.

While the women were both nominated simultaneously by the members of the CWEIA, they are ironically both school teachers who hail from Moose Factory, Ontario and have known each other their entire lives though they now live respectively in Waskaganish and Wemindji.

"I have known Virginia my whole life. She used to be my babysitter, or okay, one of my babysitters," Faries laughed.

Wabano joins the CWEIA executive with a long history of experience in similar organizations from when she lived in Ontario, working first as a regional coor-

As for Faries, being an Aboriginal Studies teacher and being very schooled in the history of Aboriginal people, she is hoping that as the new Vice President she will be able to champion many of the issues that the communities have faced as a result of the history of the Crees, particularly where colonization is concerned.

"It's about bringing issues to the forefront, those that are of dire concern in our communities and more specifically in the organization that we are going to be working with: the women. We want to be able to empower them and to uplift their spirits," said Faries.

The bond that these two women already share may be an even bigger ticket for success within the CWEIA as they feel that they are frequently on the same page, particularly where teaching has been concerned.

"Our connection is very strong. I have already received comments from people who know the two of us and think that we are going to make a good team. At the same time, we have very strong local women's groups that are very vocal and they will give us feedback that we will build upon," said Wabano.

While there are numerous issues facing Cree women today, both Wabano and Faries said that coming to the table as teachers, they want to stress the importance of education, particularly amongst the youth.

Working in these roles, they are hoping that they can help the youth to aspire to bigger dreams in becoming the kinds of professionals their communities need: such as doctors, lawyers and teachers. They hope to set an example themselves, since both are successful professional career women.

In all, they are both very excited to be in their new positions.

At the same time, Danyluk could not stress how grateful the organization has been to outgoing President Doris A. Bobbish, who has blazed the trail for many of the CWEIA members to come. While Wabano feels confident that she will be able to continue Bobbish's work, she knows that Bobbish has left some pretty big shoes to fill.

And with that, *the Nation* would like to congratulate all the members of the CWEIA's newly elected executive.



**Aanischaaaukamikw - The Cree Cultural Institute: Opening Fall 2011**

[illegible]

## A photograph showing several construction workers in hard hats and safety gear working on the wooden framing of a house. In the foreground, a worker in a blue hard hat is focused on a task. Behind him, another worker in a yellow hard hat is visible. In the background, a yellow excavator is parked on a pile of dirt, and a third worker in a red shirt is seen further back. The structure is made of numerous wooden beams and joists, and the scene is set against a backdrop of green trees under a clear sky.





# Jobs or the environment

## Keystone Pipeline has a lot of people worried about the damage it can cause

By Irkar Beljaars

In what is sure to be a contentious issue for months to come, opponents of the Keystone Pipeline project are gearing up for a fight. From the protests on Parliament Hill on September 26 to the ones in front of the White House where several prominent actors, chiefs and environmentalists were arrested in early September, it is obvious that this issue is not going away.

The Keystone Pipeline is a system to transport synthetic crude oil from the oil sands in northeastern Alberta to refineries in Illinois and Oklahoma, and eventually, when finished, the US Gulf Coast. Politicians on both sides of the border have been very vocal about the project, saying the pipeline is a choice between jobs and the environment. With a weak US economy, President Barack Obama may have no choice but to green light the project.

Most environmentalists fear another Deepwater Horizon-like oil spill, which dumped about five million barrels of oil into the Gulf of Mexico and affected the lives of thousands in the fishing industry. The spill was devastating to the local ecosystem and it will take years, if ever, for the area to recover. The Ogallala Aquifer in Nebraska, through which the Keystone Pipeline will travel, is a main source of water for farmlands in the Midwest. In a letter to Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Nebraska Governor Dave Heineman said the State Department should deny the permit on the grounds that the pipeline could put the Ogallala Aquifer at risk.

"This resource is the lifeblood of Nebraska's agriculture industry," Heineman stated in the letter. "I am concerned that the proposed pipeline will potentially have detrimental effects on this valuable natural resource and Nebraska's economy."

The State Department said recently that an environmental review of a possi-

ble oil spill from the pipeline would only affect a limited area in Nebraska's Sand Hills region, which is part of the High Plains Aquifer.

Regional Chief Bill Erasmus of the Assembly of First Nations recently



"FOR EVERY BARREL OF OIL PRODUCED, THEY USE FOUR OR FIVE BARRELS OF WATER, PEOPLE CAN NO LONGER EAT THE FISH OR DRINK THE WATER, IT'S AFFECTING THEIR WHOLE WAY OF LIFE."

spoke about the project and what it means for First Nations in Canada. "I live in Yellowknife about 800 miles from where the tar sands are and we are already feeling the effects."

Erasmus added that job creation would be at the bottom of the economic ladder (e.g. grunt work) and that the jobs would not last because once the pipeline is put in the ground it can take care of itself. "The tar sands are developing at an accelerated rate and they're looking to expand."

For every barrel of oil produced, they use four or five barrels of water, said Erasmus. "People can no longer eat the fish or drink the water, it's affecting their whole way of life."

When asked about increasing health problems occurring in Fort Chipewyan, Alberta, Erasmus said, "Fort Chipewyan

is the first community downstream and they have had abnormal cancers that are very rare, they have had many people get sick and dying. The doctor working on it is attributing that directly to the tar sands even though both the provincial and federal governments deny it."

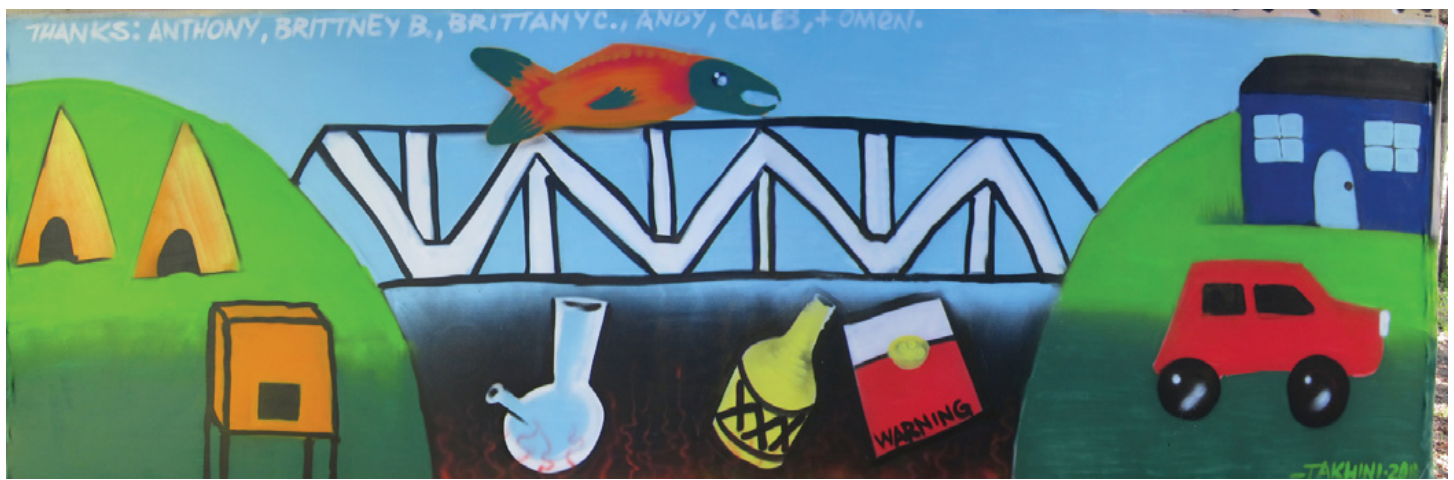
Last year the federal government destroyed a report on the tar sands and its impact on water systems in Alberta. Erasmus is not surprised by that and does not know if the Harper government has a plan for real sustainability, which worries him and other environmentalists.

Lastly, Erasmus added that protests like the one which happened on Parliament Hill and in front of the White House will only grow louder and could become a hot-button issue come election time. When Obama makes his decision on the pipeline, he will have to choose between jobs and the health of the planet and its people. I can't help but wonder: are we headed for another Deepwater Horizon disaster, and if so, how many lives will be affected this time around?

*Irkar Beljaars can be heard on Native Solidarity News every Tuesday on CKUT 90.3 FM. Find him on Facebook and Twitter (mohawk\_voice).*

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# Paint what you know

## Montreal graph artist Omen helps Yukon youth create a mural

By Christine Rigby

Every summer the Yukon government hosts a three-day leadership training camp designed to bring together youth leaders from the area and teach them valuable leadership skills that they can translate back into their respective communities. This year's camp, hosted by the Youth Directorate, facilitated by Stephen Leafloor (a.k.a. Buddha) and Marcel Da Costa (a.k.a. Frost) of Blue Print For Life, created a program that mixed leadership training and social work with hip-hop.

By integrating contemporary, youth-oriented activities into its workshops, the Youth Directorate has created a new way to teach youth ideas about life, and lifestyle, in a way that is stimulating to them. By creating cool workshops that the kids can get excited about, the program can almost guarantee its success in sharing these skills with members of the communities where they come from.

Workshops at this year's camp included beat boxing, break-dancing, graph art, video production and poetry. While most of the people involved came from the Yukon area, Montreal graph artist Omen was also asked to join the team as a workshop leader.

Omen is no stranger to the Yukon, having been there before and having found it incredibly beautiful it seems as though he always intended to go back for

one reason or another. So when he was asked by Nick Robinson, a B-boy working for the Youth Directorate, to participate in the leadership program, Omen packed his bags and headed North.

Going back to the Yukon to visit is one thing, but going back to work is another. So why go back to teach? Omen's initial response to the question was a joke about wanting to "corrupt the minds of the youth" and loving the "irony of breaking the law with his art and then having the government pay for him to teach children using the same medium". More sincerely though, he

confides that aside from loving the Yukon, he really enjoys teaching kids and also happens to be fascinated by Native culture and tradition.

Jokes and irony aside, Omen takes his workshop seriously. Having grown up less innocently than many kids in the city, he can relate to the youth he teaches at the camp. He knows firsthand that kids do not want to be told what to do, so for him teaching "is the difference between listening to children and telling them what to do".

While Omen understands that kids need room to make their own decisions





in order to learn, he also recognizes the fact that Native kids in the North, being more isolated than those in communities located closer to cities, frequently have to deal with issues, like alcohol abuse, drug abuse and conjugal violence – all of which can affect their ability to learn. Knowing this, Omen did not go to the Yukon only to teach kids how to create visual art and paint murals. He went there to lead a workshop that he hoped would give the kids a new way to express themselves and to talk about the issues they experience regularly.

The idea behind Omen's workshop was to have the participants create a mural, using graph art techniques that would also teach them how to work together, to communicate and share. Like with any project he says there has to be a starting point. According to him that means you have to find "the core", the main idea or concept. When Omen first approached the kids to come up with the "core" concept he was met with responses like "I want to draw a salmon" or "a bear"....

But, being the straightforward kind of guy he is, Omen bluntly stated, "C'mon, what about issues like addiction and abuse, I bet you see that more than you see bears?"

Having said that, Omen managed to get the kids to dig a little deeper into their daily realities to come up with a concept that addresses several of the issues they face as youth living in the North. With a solid concept in mind that was created as a group, the kids spent the next three days learning not only the technique of aerosol painting but also learning how to work as a team, to listen to each other and how to express themselves in a healthy way.

By blending in traditional views with contemporary media, the youth successfully completed a full-fledged mural that they could all be proud of. More importantly though, the kids, through Omen's workshop, gained access to new tools, and stimulating new forms of expression that they can take with them and share with other youth to help promote positive living in their communities.

For a video on the project, go to: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=fgGrQvq79n8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fgGrQvq79n8)





# Hydlo and FRIENDS unplugged

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# Rupert!



As part of the project, Hydro-Québec made a commitment to improve the portage trails along the Rupert. Over the last few weeks, about a dozen tallymen from Nemaska and Waskaganish worked at improving 34 sites covering some 23 kilometres of portage trails. The work will make for easier, more pleasant boating along the Rupert.



James Wapachee and Matthew Loon. Signs will be installed along the river to indicate where the entrance and exit of each portage trail are.



Walter Jolly, Tallyman of trapline N25, at KP 300

In 2009 and 2010, a detailed characterization of the condition of all portages on the river was conducted with the tallymen, to determine the actions that needed to be taken at locations where the water levels had dropped after diversion. These actions included extending the existing portages, creating new ones, re-aligning the trails, and generally improving the condition of the portages by building footpaths in wetland areas and/or small foot bridges across streams, as well as pruning, slashing and removing debris.

[www.hydloandfriends.com](http://www.hydloandfriends.com)



# Giving the voiceless a voice

## BC commission investigates how a mass murderer escaped justice for so long

by Akiva Levitas

The actions of a sick and demented person can shatter our view of others. The actions of BC pig farmer Robert Pickton, whose killing spree lasted from the late 1980s until his capture in 2002, is one example of this sort of madness.

There were two things that set Pickton apart from most killers. One is the fact that a lot of the remains of his victims couldn't be recovered since his pig farm gave him the perfect disposal method. The second was the large number of women, 49, he allegedly confessed to killing. A disproportionate number of which were Aboriginal.

Another issue that came to light because of this tragic episode is the mismanagement of the authorities in handling the case. Questions abound about the Vancouver police and why they didn't look into Pickton as a suspect earlier.

Pickton was sentenced in 2007 to life imprisonment with no chance of parole for 25 years. He was charged on only six counts of second-degree murder with the other 22 murder charges being dropped due to the scope of the hearings. Now that he is locked up, the next step to justice for those women savagely murdered is to look back and see what could have been done to catch Pickton earlier and prevent any future mishandlings.

Sadly, these young women aren't with us anymore and it is a loss to both the families and the communities. Though their voices have been silenced, we can still speak in their memory and look into ways of effecting real change in the system to avoid further errors in judgement on the part of the authorities when handling such cases.

On September 27, 2010, the Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia Steven Point established the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry (MWCI) in order to see what we can learn. Named as commissioner as former BC Supreme Court Judge and Attorney General Wally Oppal. In a letter to BC's current Attorney General, Oppal explained the context of remarks



he had made to show he hasn't prejudged the police on their investigation. The purpose of that letter was to get proper funding to conduct a thorough examination.

The MWCI has five objectives. The first is to examine the conduct of authorities in Vancouver during the investigation between 1997 and 2002. There are stories alleging the police acted with deaf ears to reports of missing women and stonewalled the initiation of investigations.

Secondly, the MWCI will look into how decisions were made in a 1998 case when Pickton was on trial for attempted murder and assault among other things. The case was thrown out because the witness was a heavy drug user and her testimony was deemed unreliable. That was after she escaped handcuffed and naked bleeding from the confrontation she had with Pickton. Victim and attack-

er were both treated in the same hospital in adjoining rooms later that night. The most obvious piece of evidence came when the doctors found the key to unlock the woman's handcuffs in Pickton's pocket.

The third and fourth part of this inquiry is to come up with recommendations to change the system which should have worked in preventing these tragic murders. The commission will examine how the police handle a missing person's case and suspected multiple homicides cases. Also, it will look into the way different branches of the law work homicide cases and how they work together. In the Pickton case, the MWCI will look at how the RCMP and local Vancouver police departments worked together and shared information.

The MWCI had initially planned to present its results by the end of this year. Due to the large amount of evidence and cases that need to be sorted through the release has been pushed back to an unannounced date. Court hearings will begin on October 11, where all the evidence and witnesses as well as investigators will be presented to the commission.

When we look back at this dark moment in Canadian history we are forced to think about how a certain individual could have so little regard for the lives of others and how the authorities failed the public by not investigating him sooner. The MWCI has set out to right some of those past wrongs and give those young women, who met such a horrible and untimely death, their voices back.

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2011



# Drop the sugar

## Organizers in Timmins hold their third annual expo to fight diabetes

by Xavier Kataquapit

Diabetes awareness was the focus of inspirational and motivational speakers at the third annual Timmins Diabetes Expo September 17 at the Timmins Inns and Suites. This year's event featured well-known guest speakers Mairlyn Smith, a professional home economist and author who is also an alumnus of the Second City Comedy Troupe, and Ginger Kanzer-Lewis, a past president of the American Association of Diabetes Educators and an international speaker on diabetes health issues.

"This Timmins Diabetes Expo gives diabetes professionals an opportunity to work together and provides an event where the public can meet with all the healthcare professionals in the community dedicated to diabetes awareness, education and support. People can learn more by visiting our new website at [www.timmins-diabetes-expo.com](http://www.timmins-diabetes-expo.com)," said Peggy Claveau, Wabun Health Services and Committee Chair for the Timmins Diabetes Expo.

The daylong event featured presentations by Smith and Kanzer-Lewis as well as specialized workshops by Joe-Anne Chaput, RN, Victoria Order Nurses (VON), Diabetes Education Centre; Tony Feretycki, The Footman; Nathalie Guevin, VON Diabetes Education Centre; and Jonathan Zinck, a motivational speaker. An evening session for healthcare professionals

was also hosted September 16 by Smith and Kanzer-Lewis.

Smith gave participants an informative and entertaining presentation titled "How to live to be 100 and still remember your name". She highlighted information from her latest book, "Healthy Starts Here!", including tips on healthy food choices, exercise and mental well-being.

"We need more events such as this to help others learn how to lead a healthier lifestyle. Education is a powerful tool in promoting this message. I was thrilled to see the turnout here because that means many people will be walking away with new information that will help them in dealing with diabetes," said Smith, who is from British Columbia.

Kanzer-Lewis flew in from New York City to attend the event. She explained that diabetes is a growing epidemic that will affect huge global populations in the years to come. She highlighted the fact that the European Association for the Study of Diabetes (EASD) recently announced that over 360 million people will be diagnosed with diabetes this year and that at this rate, one person dies of complications from diabetes every seven seconds.

"We have to deal with diabetes as much as possible now because at the present rate of people developing this disease, we will not be able to cope with

this situation in the future. It is important to have events such as this as it helps to prevent or delay the onset of diabetes in high-risk groups. We need to take charge now because if we don't, our medical services will not be able to manage in the future," said Kanzer-Lewis.

Plenty of volunteers took part in setting up and managing the one-day event, including Timmins High & Vocational School student Brett Nicholson of Matheson.

"It feels good to be here and to help out in an important event like this. I think we should all learn as much as we can about diabetes," said Nicholson.

The expo also brought together area social and healthcare organizations to foster new and develop existing relationships in the fight against diabetes.

"It's good to see the team work and sharing of resources to create awareness on the issue of diabetes. This cooperation of services and support is making a difference in our community," commented expo committee member Christine Devaney, Timmins Family Health Team.

The event was a one-stop information source, which featured displays by area organizations complete with blood glucose testing. Sponsors included Northern Diabetes Health Network, Canadian Diabetes Association, Wabun Health Services, Timmins Native Friendship Centre, Misiway Milopemahtesewin, Métis Nation of Ontario, Porcupine Health Unit, VON Diabetes Education Centre, Timmins Family Health Team and the Aboriginal People's Alliance of Northern Ontario.

The event was opened and closed by the Omushkegowuk Mother Clan Singers, an all-women's traditional drum group. Master of Ceremonies was Rob Wills, of Timmins Moose 93.1 FM Radio, who was also on hand to provide live radio coverage of the event.

A children's program will be hosted on November 4 and will be led by the First Nation group Turtle Concepts at the McIntyre Arena in Timmins.



Teaming up to fight diabetes was an impressive group of talented organizers and speakers at the Timmins Diabetes Expo.



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## Aboriginal wellness goes mainstream in "Working it out Together"

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## UNDER THE NORTHERN SKY

### We have the tools to fight diabetes

by Xavier Kataquapit

I just went through something that really opened my eyes. Like most people I read stories now and then about how serious the situation is for Canadians and in particular Native people when it comes to diabetes. However, after attending the Timmins Diabetes Expo recently I came away shocked at just how bad things are in terms of this terrible disease.

When a prominent guest speaker from the United States Ginger Kanzer-Lewis highlighted the fact that 360 million people will get diabetes in the world this year that caught me by surprise. Every seven seconds someone in the world dies of complications from diabetes. How crazy is that?

In this country Aboriginals are experiencing an epidemic of diabetes. There are all kinds of reasons that we Native people are so susceptible to this devastating disease and some of it can be blamed on a feast and famine genetic disposition. This developed due to the type of nomadic lifestyle we lived for hundreds if not thousands of years where we ate as much as we could when food was plentiful and starved in times of famine. In these modern times we don't have the famine as part of this cycle anymore so there is mostly feasting going on and our bodies are suffering from it.

The worst part is that because many of my people live on remote First Nations the cost of healthy food is very high as it has to be transported by air or by boat. People in general also do not have large incomes and there are many mouths to feed. As a result of all this we end up eating a lot of unhealthy food, such as hot dogs, frozen packaged foods and junk foods like pop, chips and candy.

Another eye opener for me came from a presentation by Mairlyn Smith, an international motivational speaker, author and comedian, who focused on healthy eating and lifestyles. She talked about studies that have been done on pockets of populations in the world where people are living to and over 100 years of age. It turns out that these centenarians all have something in common. They have healthy diets and they get a lot of exercise.

These champions of life eat many portions of vegetables and fruit during the day. They ate a lot of fish or seafood and not much meat. In particular they did not eat much in terms of fatty foods. So, their diets were high in fibre and very low in fat. It was also discovered that many of them had specific foods that helped them live longer lives, such as extra virgin olive oil in the Mediterranean, turmeric in southeast Asia and berries and fruits in southern California. These people also got a lot of exercise in terms of being outside, working, walking and moving around during their day.

This all pointed to a very important discovery for me and for all those attending the diabetes expo. In most cases, we can prevent or at the very least treat diabetes by copying the lifestyles of these centenarians. Smith pointed out that because we Canadians find it so hard to wean ourselves off of rich, fatty food diets we can take our lives back by making little changes one step at a time. For instance, it is very easy to make sure to eat one or two apples a day, a banana or some other fruit. These fruits are accessible and inexpensive so there is no excuse not to eat them. I am doing that every day now. When it comes to vegetables I think we all have a little more trouble trying to make sure we get some during our day but it is very easy to buy a bag of carrots and just munch on them raw through the day. Steaming broccoli or peppers is easy and quick.

Probably one of the best things we can do for ourselves when it comes to preventing and fighting diabetes is to cut back on our eating and in particular fast foods and those high in saturated fats. Cutting out soda pop is a great idea and taking tea and coffee without sugar and cream also helps. Stay away from prepared frozen packaged foods and cook at home rather than head out to a restaurant. If you do want to treat yourself to a meal at a restaurant try to stay away from buffets and ask for a doggy bag so that you don't eat your entire big meal when dining out and actually it becomes two meals for you.

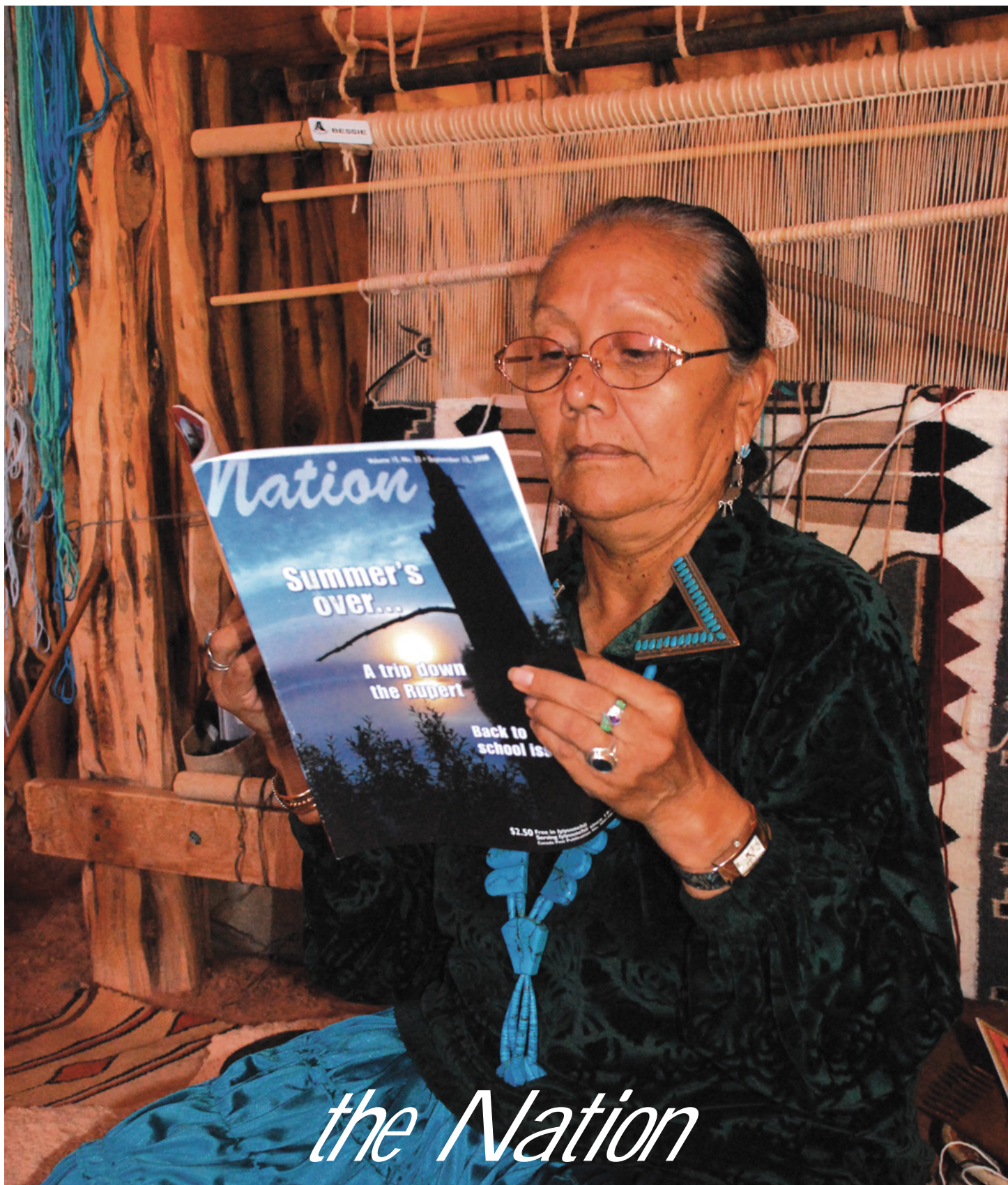
What I learned from the diabetes expo was that I could die young if I don't figure out how to eat properly and get plenty of exercise. There are many developments in the medical world that are helping diabetics but the best medicine for all of us is to change our lifestyles when it comes to eating and movement. Get up off the couch, grab an apple and go for a long walk.



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## BIRTHDAYS

Happy 12th birthday to my son Adam Felix Masti-Shem on October 7th, 2011! I wish you all the best and many many more to come. I love you so much!! Have fun and skate away this year and next year. :) From, Mom (Jeannie Maria Mamianskum in Whapmagoostui)

Birthday wishes going out to Pamela Pet on October 5th, Stephanie Rupert on October 8th, Allan Snowboy on October 15th, Kyran Snowboy on October 27th, Angela Pet on October 29th & Patricia Sandy on October 31st, 2011. I wish you all the best and many more to come! From your sister & friend: Jeannie Mam :)

On October 14th, 2007 a precious baby boy was placed in my arms. Ten little toes, ten little fingers, itty bitty eyes; little did I know that this baby boy would become my teacher and my friend. Happy 4th birthday Evander Percy Bob!! Mommy loves you with her whole heart. (Sophia Cheezo)

Someone's 2nd birthday is coming up! Mason Charles Etienne Coonishish will be blowing out his two candles on October 5th, 2011. Jaboweh nahboyemnan, you are growing up so fast. I thank God for His beautiful blessing and trusting us to take care of you. Mommy & Daddy loves you very much! We'll have fun on your birthday ok? Love ALWAYS from Mommy & Daddy (MC, CC) Sending birthday wishes to one special girl Martina Sam, who will be celebrating her birthday on October 7, 2011 in Chisasibi. Tons of hugs & kisses and luv ya lots gurl! Enjoy your special day! From Gookum Christine

## HOLIDAY GREETINGS

Happy Halloween to Rachel Salt :) and to all the scary monsters out there. Have a safe and fun Halloween!! :) From: a scary monster in Whap.:P

## PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Where to get help: bilingual, anonymous, confidential and free phone services, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

### Missing Children's

**Network:** They'll help you find kids who have run away or disappeared. 514-843-4333.

### Kid's Help Phone Line:

1-800-668-6868 ([www.kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca))

### Youth helpline:

1-800-263-2266 ([www.tel-jeunes.com](http://www.tel-jeunes.com))

### Parent helpline:

1-800-361-5085 ([www.par-enthelpline.ca](http://www.par-enthelpline.ca))

### Drugs: help and reference:

1-800-265-2626 ([www.drogue-aiderreference.qc.ca](http://www.drogue-aiderreference.qc.ca))

### Gambling: help and reference:

1-800-265-2626 ([www.info-reference.qc.ca](http://www.info-reference.qc.ca))

### S.O.S. Conjugal Violence:

1-800-363-9010 ([www.sosviolenceconjugale.com](http://www.sosviolenceconjugale.com))

### Health and Sexuality resources center:

1-888-855-7432 (Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm) ([www.criss.org](http://www.criss.org))

### Gay Helpline:

1-888-505-1010 (Monday to Friday, 8 am to 3 am and Saturday-Sunday, 11 am to 3 am)

### The Native Women's Shelter of Montreal:


1-866-403-4688. ([www.nwsm.info](http://www.nwsm.info))

### Suicide Action Québec:

1-866-277-3553

**Residential School Survivors:** A 24 hour toll-free crisis line is available to provide immediate emotional assistance and can be reached 24-hours a day, seven days a week: 1-866-925-4419. Other support services and information for survivors is available on the AFN website at:

<http://www.afn.ca/residentialschools/resources.html>



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